



Inside ICE

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DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff, ICE Director of Investigations Marcy Forman and Oceanside, Calif. Police Chief Jerry Lance discuss the success of Operation Community Shield at a press conference in Washington, D.C.

ICE ARRESTS 582 VIOLENT GANG MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES IN TWO-WEEK NATIONWIDE ENFORCEMENT

**More than 1,057 arrests under ICE's ongoing
"Community Shield" anti-gang initiative.**

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, and Marcy Forman, Director of Investigations for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), today announced the arrest of 582 street gang members and associates during a two-week, nationwide enforcement action under the auspices of "Operation Community Shield," ICE's ongoing national anti-gang initiative.

From July 16 to July 28, ICE offices throughout the United States teamed up with federal, state and local law enforcement partners to target members of more than 54 violent street gangs, including Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13), Sureños, 18th Street Gang, Latin Kings, Vatos

Locos, Mexican Mafia, La Raza gang, Border Brothers, Brown Pride, Norteno, Florencia 13, Tiny Rascal, Asian Boyz, Jamaican Posse, and numerous other violent street gangs.

The 582 gang members and associates, including 11 gang leaders, arrested in this two-week operation are accused of various criminal violations and/or administrative immigration violations. In total, 76 of these individuals have been charged with criminal violations that range from illegally re-entering the United States after deportation; to being alien in possession of a firearm; to possession of fraudulent documents or various state crimes.

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ICE COMMUNITY SHIELD ARRESTS TOP 1,000

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The vast majority of the gang members and associates, 506, were arrested on administrative immigration charges, ranging from being a convicted felon foreign national subject to removal; to entering the country without inspection; to violating the terms of a visa. Of these individuals, 261 are foreign nationals who have prior criminal convictions, rendering them subject to removal from the United States.

“Street gangs in America have grown and expanded their influence to an alarming level, marked by increased violence and criminal activity,” said Secretary Chertoff. “These gangs pose a severe threat to public safety and this growth must not go unchallenged. We will continue to coordinate our efforts closely with our law enforcement partners nationally and use our collective authorities to help rid our communities of this malignancy.”

“We have a message for violent street gang members in America: ‘stopping your violence and criminal activities is high on ICE’s list of priorities,’” said Forman. “We’re backing up our resolve with results. In the last two weeks we’ve arrested 11 of your gang leaders, 490 members and 81 associates in 27 states and we’re just getting started.” This initiative harnessed the work of 40 ICE offices and more than 84 federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. This operation employed 384 ICE agents and officers, 247 state and local officers and 92 agents from the DEA, ATF and FBI.

Some of the gang members arrested in this operation include:

- On July 20 in Chicago ICE agents assisted by Chicago and Hanover Park police arrested Ramon Martinez-Valencia who is a high-ranking enforcer of “Surenos-13.” His position in the gang was to carry out the gang’s violent acts against its enemies. Martinez-Valencia had felony weapons and violence convictions and was previously deported from the United States in June 2003 only to illegally return.
- On July 19 in the San Diego area ICE agents assisted by the Oceanside Police arrested Jesus Carrillo, who has previous convictions for causing bodily harm and sex with a minor under three years of age. The arrests during the past two weeks are the latest enforcement action under Operation Community Shield, a nationwide ICE anti-gang initiative intended to disrupt, dismantle, and assist in the criminal prosecution of violent gangs by employing the full range of authorities available to ICE.



ICE uses its broad immigration authorities (both criminal and administrative) against gang members, as well as its customs authorities in targeting gang-related narcotics smuggling, money laundering, and in seeking the forfeiture of illegally derived assets.

Operation Community Shield involves strong partnerships and cooperation with existing federal, state, and local anti-gang efforts. Such partnerships are essential to the success of the initiative and to ensure officer safety during operations. ICE uses intelligence on gang organizations and leadership provided by state and local authorities. This information is then used whenever possible to arrest, prosecute, and/or deport individual gang members.

Operation Community Shield also has an important foreign component, coordinating efforts through ICE’s Attaché offices abroad, particularly with those governments that are also experiencing gang problems. To date, ICE has participated in several anti-gang law enforcement summits and conferences throughout Central America to better coordinate anti-gang related efforts.

The initial target of Operation Community Shield was MS-13, which is one of the largest and most violent street gangs in the country. In February, ICE kicked off the initiative with agents in six major U.S. cities conducting a coordinated enforcement operation that resulted in the arrest of 103 members of MS-13. In the months that followed, ICE agents throughout the country joined ranks and continued targeting MS-13 members in their jurisdictions.

In May 2005, ICE expanded Operation Community Shield to include all criminal street gangs and prison gangs with foreign-born members. With the launch of this second phase, ICE’s Operation Community Shield aims to ensure that gang members have no safe haven in our nation’s communities.

Inside ICE is an e-newsletter produced by the ICE Office of Public Affairs to inform the public about the mission, operations and activities of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Please send comments and contributions to:

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Russ Bergeron
Editor

ICE BREAKS JERSEY SMUGGLING, SLAVE RING

NEWARK, N.J.—Ten people, all alleged members of a ring operating in the United States and Honduras that smuggled young, undocumented Honduran women into the U.S. and forced them to work off their smuggling debt in bars in Hudson County, N.J., were indicted July 21.

The suspected ringleader, Luisa Medrano, was arrested July 20. Seven others from the group have been arrested, three by Honduran authorities. Two persons remain at large.

Medrano, 50, of Cliffside Park, N.J., is a U.S. citizen and native of El Salvador. She is the owner of three bars in Union City and Guttenberg, N.J., where the young women who were trafficked to Hudson County were put to work.

The women, mostly from rural, poor villages in Honduras—some as young as 14—were recruited under the false promise of getting legitimate jobs as waitresses in restaurants in New Jersey. Once brought to Hudson County by way of a safe house in Houston, Texas, however, they were put to work at several bars

owned by the ringleader and subject to physical and emotional abuse.

The 31-count indictment describes, among other abuses, young victims being raped while being smuggled to the United States; victims sometimes far younger than 21 forced to continually drink alcohol and dance with male customers at the bars to raise money to pay human smuggling fees of between \$10,000 and \$20,000; victims being beaten if they were not compliant; victims forced to work in the bars up to seven days a week; and threats of deportation or harm to them and their families in Honduras if they did not comply with the ring's demands.

Young women who became pregnant were forced to terminate their pregnancies so the ring could maintain them as income-producers, according to the indictment. In one case, a 21-year-old victim was allegedly forced to take pills intended to induce a spontaneous abortion. The next day, the victim gave birth to a live baby girl, who died shortly afterward.

"This case illustrates ICE's commitment in identifying, investigating

and prosecuting individuals who participate in the trafficking of human beings," said Kyle Hutchins, Special Agent-in-Charge of Immigration and Customs Enforcement in Newark. "These individuals are criminals, driven by greed, who act without conscience in their brazen disregard of human rights and freedoms."

The indictment charges the 10 individuals with violations of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, including counts of conspiracy to commit forced labor, forced labor, alien smuggling and harboring illegal aliens. Medrano also owned three multi-unit buildings in Union City, where the victims were allegedly forced to live while they worked to pay off their smuggling debts.

The ring employed recruiters in Honduras to locate attractive, innocent young women—most in their teens and early 20s. It used smugglers, commonly known as "coyotes," to get them into the United States illegally, and "enforcers," who advised the Honduran women upon arrival in New Jersey of the true nature of their work. The women were told that they were required to repay a smuggling fee of up to \$20,000 and the enforcers used physical abuse and intimidation to control and use them to make money for the conspirators.

The young women received \$240 for approximately 48 hours of work per week, plus an amount related to the sale of drinks to customers they met at the bars. But they were required to pay virtually all their earnings to the ring.

Honduran authorities have worked closely with U.S. law enforcement to bring all the ring's participants to justice.



ICE agents escort Luisa Medrano, center, following her arrest as the ringleader of a group that smuggled young women into the United States and forced them to work in Medrano's bars.

ICE GETS INDICTMENT ON FAKE DOC KINGPIN

DENVER, Colo.—A federal grand jury in Denver, Colo., has indicted a Mexican man who ran an international criminal organization responsible for the illegal production and distribution of counterfeit identification documents in cities throughout the United States.

Pedro Castorena-Ibarra, 42, of Guadalajara, Mexico, is believed to be hiding in Mexico. The U.S. government plans to file a formal request for his extradition with the government of Mexico. To date, more than 50 members of his organization have been prosecuted in Denver and 20 computerized counterfeit document labs have been seized around the country.

Marcy Forman, Director of Investigations for ICE, said, "This criminal organization represents one of the largest and most sophisticated document fraud rings ever uncovered, so much so that it set up franchises in most major U.S. cities and counterfeited dozens of types of documents. Fraudulent documents can be provided to terror-

ists and other criminals, posing a major homeland security vulnerability. Working with our law enforcement partners, ICE will continue to identify and shut down these vulnerabilities."

The indictment of Castorena-Ibarra follows a five-year investigation by ICE agents in Denver, with assistance from the IRS, the Social Security Administration Inspector General and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

The investigation began in October 2000 when ICE agents began investigating the sale and distribution of counterfeit identity documents in Denver. During the course of the investigation Castorena-Ibarra was identified as the leader of a large scale criminal organization involved in manufacturing and distributing counterfeit identity documents, including resident alien cards, Social Security cards, Mexico Matricula Consular ID cards, driver's licenses and identity documents from various states of Mexico and the United States.



Pedro Castorena-Ibarra is wanted for overseeing a massive counterfeit document organization that produced and sold fake documents in cities throughout the United States.

The investigation revealed that Castorena-Ibarra and other members of his criminal organization have been involved in manufacturing and distributing counterfeit identity documents in numerous cities throughout the United States. Investigators found that previous investigations conducted in Los Angeles and other cities dating back to the late 1980s also targeted members of the Castorena-Ibarra family and organization.

ICE CHICAGO DEPORTS 77 IN WEEKLY JPATS FLIGHT

CHICAGO, Ill.—Javier Mesa-Rios, 33, convicted of shooting a man to death during a robbery attempt in 1995, was one of 77 Mexican nationals deported last Friday by ICE.

Half of those removed, 38, had criminal convictions for violations ranging from murder and sexual assault, to burglary and drug possession. The large number of removals in one week reflects a national trend of increased depor-



Javier Mesa-Rios

tations as ICE pursues its objective of restoring integrity to the nation's immigration system.

Mesa-Rios was convicted in Cook County, Ill., in 1997 on charges of first-degree murder and attempted armed robbery. Mesa-Rios shot and killed a man during an attempted robbery. He was sentenced to 20 years on the murder charge and five years on the attempted armed robbery charge.

Mesa-Rios, who illegally entered the U.S. by crossing the southwest border just a month before committing the murder, was released from

prison July 13 and turned over to ICE for deportation.

ICE's Chicago Office deports aliens to Mexico on a weekly Justice Prisoner and Alien Transportation System (JPATS) flight that makes stops in Chicago and Kansas City.

"A priority for ICE is to get criminals off our streets and keep America secure," said ICE Field Office Director Debbie Achim, who leads the ICE Detention and Removal Operations Office in Chicago. "We are bringing to bear the full force of our authority to locate and remove these criminals from the U.S."

CHICAGO ICE RETURNS \$2,750 TO 82-YEAR-OLD SCAM VICTIM

CHICAGO, Ill.—ICE agents returned \$2,750 to an elderly Chicago man who has lost approximately \$60,000 of his savings to telemarketing con artists operating from Canada.

The victim's money was recovered by Project COLT, a multi-agency initiative targeting telemarketing fraud that includes ICE, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the FBI and the U.S. Postal Service Inspection Service.

The 82-year-old victim was first contacted early this year by telemarketers claiming to be attorneys and/or government officials who told him he won the Canadian lottery. The victim was instructed to send money to cover the insurance and taxes on the lottery winnings before the money could be released. Since February the victim has sent approximately \$60,000 to the telemarketing con artists. The victim recently moved in with a family member because of the sheer volume of telemarketing calls he was receiving.

Elissa A. Brown, Special Agent-in-Charge for the Chicago ICE office, warned Illinois residents to be vigilant about such scams, which have already bilked people—especially senior citizens—in the United States out of tens of millions of dollars.

"There's no such thing as free money," said Brown. "This victim only received a small portion back of the thousands of dollars he sent to these criminals. These sophisticated con artists appear trustworthy to their elderly victims."

DEPORTED ALIEN GETS 12 YEARS FOR REPEAT RE-ENTRY INTO U.S.

AUSTIN, Texas—An illegal alien who repeatedly re-entered the United States after being deported has been sentenced to 12 years in prison.

Federal District Court Judge Sam Sparks sentenced Francisco Quevado-Hernandez, 38, July 19 after Quevado-Hernandez was convicted for illegally re-entering the United States five times after his original deportation in August 1997.

ICE agents found Quevado-Hernandez at the Travis County (Texas) Jail. ICE agents routinely coordinate with other law enforcement agencies and check prison populations to locate criminal aliens. Quevado-Hernandez has a criminal record ranging from resisting arrest to aggravated assault on a peace officer.

"This 12-year prison sentence demonstrates that those who habitually violate our nation's immigration laws will be vigorously prosecuted," said Alonzo Pena, ICE's Special Agent-in-Charge for the San Antonio Office of Investigations. "ICE is committed to restoring integrity to our nation's immigration system."

U.S., CANADIANS FIND FIRST-EVER NORTHERN BORDER DRUG TUNNEL

SEATTLE, Wash.—Three men are under arrest and a lengthy investigation is continuing into a sophisticated tunnel running from British Columbia, Canada, into Washington.

Although tunnels have been found at the southern border of the United States, this is the first tunnel ever discovered between Canada and the United States. The tunnel is approximately 360 feet long and runs at a depth of between three and 10 feet. It is reinforced with iron rebar and 2x6-inch wood supports. Both Canadian and American law enforcement have been monitoring the construction of the tunnel since it was first discovered by Canadian authorities in February 2005.

Frances Raj, 30; Timothy Woo, 34; and Johnathan Valenzuela, 27; all of Surrey, B.C., Canada, were charged July 21 in U.S. District Court in Seattle with conspiracy to distribute and import marijuana. Raj owns the property on the Canadian side of the border where the entrance to the tunnel is hidden under a Quonset hut. On the American side, the tunnel terminates beneath the living room floor of a home located in Lynden, Wash. Construction of the tunnel was completed in early July 2005. Using a search warrant, agents entered the home July 2 to examine the tunnel. Shortly thereafter, a U.S. District Court judge authorized the installation of cameras and listening devices in the home to monitor activities.

Agents from various law enforcement authorities, including the DEA and ICE, observed multiple trips by the three men through the tunnel carrying large hockey bags or garbage bags. The bags were driven south for delivery. In one instance, the bags were loaded into an SUV and delivered to a woman with a small child at a shopping mall. The Washington State Patrol stopped her car and found it loaded with 93 pounds of marijuana.

"The security of our borders remains paramount to the success of both countries to protect our citizens against those who would harm us," said Leigh Winchell, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Seattle ICE Office of Investigations. "ICE remains committed to working with all our partners on both sides of the border to ensure the freedoms that we and our neighbors to the north enjoy."

Inside ICE

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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
was established in March 2003 as the largest
investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.
ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a
21st century law enforcement agency with
broad responsibilities for a number of
key homeland security priorities.

CULTURAL TREASURE



This 16th century Peruvian artifact "El Altar de Challapampa," was stolen in 2002. In May 2003, after ICE New York launched an investigation, the artifact was discovered in Santa Fe, New Mexico. John P. Clark, Deputy Assistant Secretary for ICE, and Eduardo Ferrero, the Ambassador of Peru to the United States, announced the return of the artifact to the government of Peru July 26.